



June 6, 2014

This week's edition includes important information I want to share with you:

- **Stakeholder Community Forum Meetings:** DIDD and TennCare held joint stakeholder meetings about the Concept Paper in Jackson and Nashville this week. I appreciate everyone coming out to share their thoughts, concerns and questions with us. Next week, the East stakeholder meeting will be in Knoxville on June 11 at the Rothchild Catering and Conference Center. Click [here](#) for times and to RSVP. If you are unable to attend any of the meetings, I encourage you to read the concept paper and submit comments [here](#) or on TennCare's website. Thank you so much for your participation. It is critical as we begin to prepare to submit the proposed waivers to CMS. Your opinion matters and now is the time to share it.
- **Targeted Provider Rate Increase:** As part of Tennessee's General Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2014-2015 (2014 Public Chapter 919) passed by the Legislature in April and signed by Governor Haslam in May, funding was included to enhance certain provider rates. Governor Haslam included \$2,215,300 in state funds in his budget and when matched with federal funds, this money will increase the total amount of these waiver funded rates by \$6,351,400. This increased funding will be allocated to provide the most positive impact to the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) system assisted by very helpful feedback from stakeholders.

The primary target for this new money is increasing the rates for services that are performed by Direct Support Professionals (DSP). I have received significant input from stakeholders emphasizing that DSP pay is too low and this rate increase assumes a base DSP pay rate in the existing rate calculation for residential and day services that is \$.11 greater on July 1, 2014 than what it is now. In addition, the Personal Assistance rate (and matching Hospital Attendant rate) will increase by \$.04 per quarter hour (\$.16 per hour) on July 1, 2014 in an effort to make this important service more available in our service system. An updated Available Services and Rates schedule will be posted on DIDD's website before July 1, 2014.

I am so thankful to Governor Haslam and the General Assembly members who supported our work with their appropriation of this money to improve our system.

- **East Tennessee Regional Office Move:** After being located on the grounds of Lakeshore Mental Health Institute for approximately 36 years, the East Tennessee Regional Office in Knoxville is moving June 16-18 to: 520 W. Summit Hill Drive, Suite 201; Knoxville, 37902. A complete listing of office contact information will be submitted to the provider network upon the move; however, the main telephone line will remain at 865-588-0508. We appreciate everyone's patience and understanding during this transition.

- **New Employee:** Please join me in welcoming Pierre Womble as the new Director of Harold Jordan Center. Prior to this position, Pierre served as RHD's Executive Director for eight years. Pierre has a bachelor's degree from Middle Tennessee State University and master's degree from Tennessee State University. With Pierre's experience and knowledge in our field, we are certain he will be a valuable asset to the DIDD team. Pierre can be reached at Pierre.Womble@tn.gov.
- **List of Excluded Individuals and Entities (LEIE):** Every provider must compare their employees and subcontractors against the List of Excluded Individuals and Entities (LEIE - <http://oig.hhs.gov/exclusions/>) every month and report those findings to DIDD using the Excel template provided last month. The next submittal by all providers to DIDD is required by **June 16, 2014**. Subsequent submissions will be due by the 15th of each month or the first business day after.

A few pointers for the submission due on Monday, June 16:

- DIDD LEIE templates and other documents can be found: http://tn.gov/didd/provider_agencies/OIG/index.shtml
- Please add the June data to your previous submitted Excel spreadsheet and email it to the appropriate Regional Office contact on or before June 16.
- The Exclusion Screen Month for June will be 201406.
- If all Provider Employee, Contractor and Contractor Employee checks are No Match, only a single line entry of Columns A, B, C, R, and S is required.
- If there is a verified exclusion, please fill in all appropriate columns for that individual/entity only.
- The Federal Government updated the LEIE database on June 4, so the June checks can now be performed with the most recent data. You can get an e-mail or a Rich Site Summary (RSS) feed from Health and Human Services (HHS) when it is updated. Go to the bottom right of the OIG webpage (<http://oig.hhs.gov/exclusions/index.asp>) and sign up for the e-mail and/or RSS feed of when the LEIE is updated each month.

Thanks to all those who have actively participated in the development and implementation of the systems required to facilitate our compliance with this federally mandated screening process. If we can continue to be a resource to you in this ongoing endeavor, please contact Ronnie Rogers-Sirten at Ronnie.E.Rogers-Sirten@tn.gov.

- **An Ounce of Prevention:** This week's topic is timely billing, which is addressed in the Provider Agreement, Clause A.19.

Per the clause **A.19. Service Authorization** (a) (ii): *DIDD will refuse payment to the Provider for services billed to DIDD that are beyond the level of services authorized by DIDD through Individual Support Plans or Individual Support Plan Amendments, exceed payment rates for these services **or are not billed to DIDD within the appropriate time frame after the delivery of services.***

A.19. Service Authorization (d): *All payments to the Provider for authorized services are final payments for the billing period invoiced by the Provider and paid by DIDD or submitted to TennCare for payment by DIDD. The Provider shall provide written notification to DIDD setting forth the amount, details, and basis of any payment dispute within thirty (30) days after receiving payment for services.*

All providers have an initial six (6) weeks to submit their billing as "Current." Providers also have an additional 6-7 weeks to submit any previously unsubmitted claims as "Late Bills" and the same 6-7 weeks to correct any errors that might have been made to any previously submitted

claims as “Adjustments.” Claims submitted and/or adjusted within this 12-13 week period are considered timely. The exact dates that claims can be submitted and adjusted varies from month to month due to the timing of sweep dates for processing and payment. The current dates available for submission of initial claims and adjustment of previously submitted claims are always displayed on the Provider Claims Processing (PCP) login screen.

- **12th Annual Tennessee Disability MegaConference:** On May 29 and 30, nearly 650 self-advocates, family members, providers, exhibitors, educators and others attended the 12th Annual Tennessee Disability MegaConference at the Nashville Airport Marriott Hotel. This year’s theme was “Change” and that theme was not only evident in the variety of sessions available to attendees, but in many aspects of the conference itself. This year’s conference marked an unprecedented collaboration with other groups including TNCO, who held a concurrent one-day conference for its members; TennesseeWorks, who held their quarterly meeting concurrent with the conference; VR, who held their public hearing on their state plan; and TDOT, who held a lunch time session to get input from the audience on a variety of topics related to transportation – very important to people with disabilities.



Attendance increased this year and attendees appeared very engaged in the various sessions, keynotes and other activities such as MegaMarketplace, Exhibitor’s Reception, the evening dance and The Arc Awards banquet. Presenters remarked that more people appeared to be taking part in the sessions instead of just “hanging out.” Attendees commented on the great variety of session topics including employment, families making it work without formal supports, post-secondary education, special needs trusts, health care for people with disabilities and so much more. We encourage you to access the TN Disability MegaConference website [here](#) to see pictures from the event and obtain copies of presentations from the various sessions.

- **Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS®):** May 2014 was the second anniversary of the implementation of the Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS®) as the uniform assessment for persons supported through DIDD. Therefore, I am sending this reminder of important information regarding the SIS® assessment:
 - The SIS® is required for all persons receiving Residential, Day, or PA services.
 - The person being assessed is HIGHLY encouraged to attend the SIS® assessment, although not required. However, the assessor must meet the person face-to-face prior to starting the assessment interview.
 - The SIS® requires a minimum of two respondents who have known the person for at least 90 days and can speak to his/her support needs throughout the 24-hour period. Both respondents should be present for the entirety of the assessment.
 - Each agency is responsible for designating a single SIS® liaison for each region/office. This liaison will be responsible for contacting appropriate respondents who meet the above criteria, scheduling the assessment with the SIS® assessor and respondents and ensuring

all respondents arrive at the assessment location on time prepared to participate in the assessment interview which generally lasts 1.5 – 2 hours.

- It is not appropriate for the agency liaison to give the SIS® assessor names of house managers, program coordinators, companions, etc. for the assessor to make scheduling arrangements on their own.
- The person's legal guardian/conservator, if applicable, must be informed of the pending SIS® assessment and should be afforded the opportunity to attend.

DIDD implemented a self-imposed deadline of completing a first round SIS® assessment in the Arlington, Statewide and Self-Determination waivers by June 30, 2015. This deadline was deemed reasonable given the number of assessments to complete and number of available assessors, but we are below projections by nearly 1,100 assessments. We continue to receive reports of provider agencies not returning assessor phone calls, not sending staff who meet the criteria to be a SIS® respondent, having to cancel assessments after the assessor has arrived because staff were not informed of the scheduled assessment or having to cancel assessments because the conservator was never informed of the assessment.

Please ensure all of your staff are aware of the purpose and importance of the SIS® assessment and work to get these assessments completed timely.

- **Person Centered Practices:** The department is now accepting applications for Person Centered Thinking (PCT) trainers! Over the next few months, our very own Person Centered Thinking mentor trainers will work to credential eight new PCT trainers across the state.

Becoming an effective PCT trainer requires mastery of the material. The trainer candidate will also need to possess and demonstrate skills in training adults, along with facilitating and managing group dynamics. In addition, one should be motivated, dedicated and have the time to allocate to studying and learning the material. This process is in place for all trainers recognized through The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices (TLC PCP). Trainer candidates will also need to demonstrate skills and effectiveness in teaching the material and supporting a positive learning experience for training participants. Each trainer candidate will be supported by a Tennessee Mentor trainer from TLC PCP. It is the trainer candidate's responsibility to complete all the steps outlined by TLC PCP. You must have also completed the two-day Person Centered Thinking training. If selected, your Mentor Trainer will explain additional benefits and advantages of being a certified trainer. For more information and to apply contact Jim Walker, Mentor Trainer, at Jim.Walker@tn.gov. Do not delay! The application is available [here](#) and deadline to apply is **July 31, 2014**.

- **Community Education Series Workshop:** Tennessee Disability Pathfinder and the Tennessee Career Center at Talbott, will provide their Community Education Series workshop, *Transitioning Into Employment* on Friday, June 30 from 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. at the Tennessee Career Center (6057 Andrew Johnson Highway; Ste 6A, Talbott).

What community resources are available for individuals with disabilities transitioning from school to employment? Please join them for an informative training to learn more about the following services available through the presenting agencies:

- Advocacy services to prepare for transitioning from school
- Educational opportunities to learn how a job can affect government benefits
- A statewide clearinghouse of disability-related information, including employment resources
- Assistive technology devices and services to support employment

- A place where employers and job seekers can connect
- Assessment and training services for individuals with disabilities to prepare for and obtain employment

Continuing Education credits will be available for Social Workers only. The intended audience is service providers and family members in the East Tennessee area. This training is free of charge, but [registration is required by clicking here](#). For more information, call (615) 875-5082 or e-mail Megan.Hart@vanderbilt.edu.

- **Tennessee Employment First Leadership Academy:** The Tennessee Employment First Leadership Academy is a four-day training held on September 4-8. Created by the Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN) and the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities (TCDD), this training prepares people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities to advocate for better jobs and services options in Tennessee. Advocates believe people with disabilities should have real jobs with real pay, just like workers without disabilities. Training includes ways to improve job options for workers with disabilities; ways to work and advocate with employers, the legislature and other groups; finding ways to shift from segregated to integrated work settings and learning about benefits and services offered by Social Security and other programs. Travel and lodging are fully covered for participants. Application deadline is **June 19**. To request an application, e-mail Ned Solomon at Ned.Solomon@tn.gov with the subject line "2014 TN Academy." For questions about the training, e-mail Natalia M. Rivera Morales at nriveramoraes@autisticadvocacy.org or call (202) 558-4858.

- **Donation to St. Jude's:** The people who work in Quality Products, a work center on Greene Valley's campus, wanted to do something special for the St. Jude's Affiliate located at the Niswonger Children's Hospital in Johnson City. They discovered the children being treated at St. Jude's preferred various snack options from what they typically receive at the hospital. Quality Products also learned that as each child undergoes a blood draw, they get to choose an item out of a treasure box filled with toys, dolls, crayons, coloring books, etc. The next step was placing donation boxes throughout Greene Valley, the East fiscal office and the East Tennessee Regional Office. In addition to the wish list items requested, cash donations were made to



purchase iTunes and Walmart gift cards. On May 21, Mike Hays and Bob Mitchell (pictured above) traveled to Johnson City and presented St. Jude's staff with boxes of goodies collected for the children. Mike, being the ultimate gentleman, shook and kissed each lady's hand. It goes without saying they were very impressed! Bob enjoyed the outdoor presentation and smiled all day. Afterwards, they celebrated by dining at Cheddars and of course, Mike made it a point to thank each server before the gentlemen left the restaurant.

- **Save the Date:** A reminder TennesseeWorks is hosting a Think Employment! summit on September 17, 2014 from 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Scarritt Bennett Center in Nashville. Keynote and feature presentations will highlight family engagement and knowledge building, competitive and customized employment, current legislative initiatives, raising awareness and expectations, aligning agency and community supports as well as youth development and leadership. For more information, please contact Jenn Rowan at 615-875-9801 or Jennifer.L.Rowan@vanderbilt.edu.
- **Policy Publication Notice:** The following policy has been uploaded to the DIDD Policies and Procedures home page on the Internet: 80.1.1 New Provider Application Policy. You can obtain a copy of the policy [here](#).
- **2014 Title VI Self Survey:** This survey has been posted on the DIDD website in the Civil Rights section [here](#). Chapter 2 of the Provider Manual, 2.7.b(10) lists completion of the Title VI Self-Survey as a provider requirement; all providers are required to complete the survey. Each agency should complete only one (1) survey which includes reporting for all agency locations. Completed surveys are due **August 1, 2014** and should be submitted to Annie Bernard at Annie.Bernard@tn.gov.
- **Focus Group Event:** The Jackson-Memphis Focus Groups held their Spring Fling at Star Center in Jackson on May 28. DJ Sally presented a great karaoke and dance opportunity for approximately 100 people from both areas. Many providers brought food and snacks, with Omni Visions providing the entertainment. Thanks to everyone who contributed in making this event a success; a great time and experience was had by all!

Be safe and have a great weekend!

~Debbie